A FISHERMAN PUBLICATION

The Long Island FISHERMAN

The Largest Weekly Sportfishing Magazine in the United States!

January 7th, 1982 ★ Volume 17, Number 1 ★ 17th Year of Publishing ★ SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS

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EDITORIAL

POLITICAL ACTION FOR 1982

We're sure that our readers are well aware of the functions we believe we have a responsibility to live up to. Of course, our first priority has to be those fishing reports, and to provide top quality articles so that our family of readers can get the most out of their sport. That effort takes much time and man-power and so it should be, because it is our prime function.

As second function is our political activity. Some folks believe that we have only recently become politically active, yet the history of the publication indicates that is not the case. The Long Island Fisherman was one of the vanguard publications to demand a 200-mile limit and that was way back in 1966. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, there was the fight to protect wetlands, then the PCB controversy, fisheries management, the Pisani-Mannix bunker law of the mid-1970s, the Gillnet and Trammel net bill of last year, and these are just the highlights of an ongoing interest of the publication in political action. There are also a great many things—both little and great—that we do behind the scenes and of which no one ever knows that we were responsible for resolving a problem. These activities come out of a belief that we are the representative for recreational saltwater fishermen on Long Island.

Through the years there have been those who believe we are troublemakers, but that just isn't true. All of our efforts have been undertaken with thoughtful concern and a firm commitment to credibility and reason. Our goal has always been to resolve problems, not confuse or create them. In spite of the care we take in these controversies, we are human and we do make a mistake here and there. However, we are proud of our record and believe our errors to have been few indeed.

Why should we maintain a posture of political action? The reason is simple. This is a complex world that is rapidly overpopulating and there are many more specific interest groups today than ever before and there will be even more tomorrow. The armada of special interest groups all vying for space, time, and privileges has put great pressure on resources and enhanced competition for resources and leisure activities. Once the first special interest group began to lobby for its interests, the rest of the groups were at a disadvantage. They realized their disadvantage and created their own lobbying efforts. In most groups there are dues and fees and these monies pay the lobbying expenses. This obviously isn't the case in recreational fishing and thus the organization of and representation of recreational marine anglers has been difficult. Thus, from the beginning the ownership and editors of The Long Island Fisherman have felt a real responsibility to be a representative for our family of readers.

Frankly, there isn't enough staff or enough money to cover all the problems and all the bases. In fact, much of the man hours are supplied on a volunteer basis. We tell you this so perhaps you'll better understand why we aren't always able to be everywhere and do everything. Perhaps you can better understand why we ask for your help so often and why your support and help are so vitally important. Yet, we do seem to get a lot done. We're not patting ourselves on the back, but rather it is a direct statement of the obvious: The Long Island Fisherman plus the interest and support of its readers equals getting the job done.

Inevitably there are rumors and myths about what we are doing and why we do it. There are those, for example, who seriously believe that we are trying to eradicate commercial fishing in New York—perhaps even the whole country. This is nonsense. First of all, such a position lacks all credibility. If we were to deny the right to exist of commercial fishermen, then we would also be digging the first shovels of dirt for our own grave. Elimination isn't the point. Instead, we urge a recognition that there are two industries and two interest groups vying for the same space, the same resources, and both need a bright and healthy future. We argue that each industry must keep to its own niche. In this way, both will not only survive but flourish. Our efforts to pass laws that affect commercial fishing are intended to separate the two user groups in time and space, thus eliminating social conflict and encouraging flourishing industries. Perhaps if we can get past the emotional fog that clouds this understanding we can move on towards better management of resources and industries.

Another myth held by some in our family concerns why we support a saltwater license. Again, it is emotion that has fogged most people's judgment. We (LIF) gain nothing monetarily from a saltwater license, but a

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Volume 17, Number 1 **January 7th, 1982**

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About the Cover—

For "Northerners" weary of cold and snow, the Florida Keys provide much needed relief. In the "back country," redfish offer fine light tackle sport during the winter months. See the article on page 18. Cover photo by Pete Barrett.

COMING NEXT WEEK: **NEW YORK BOAT SHOW JANUARY 14TH THRU 24TH**

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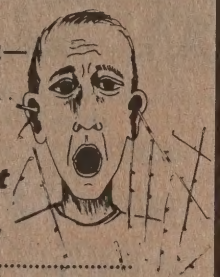

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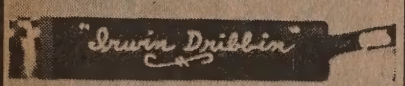

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The day-long seminar is free and no pre-registration is required.

BOATING SAFETY COURSE

Two 13-lesson courses, "Boating Skills & Seamanship" and "Sailing & Seamanship," will be given concurrently at the Cold Spring Harbor High School, Turkey Lane, Cold Spring Harbor, on Tuesday evenings, 8PM-10PM, commencing January 5, 1982, by Flotilla 22-3, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary.

Both courses will include Rules of the Road, weather, charts and navigation, radio-telephone procedure, and marlinspike seamanship. The "BS&S" course will also include power boat handling and marine engines, and the "Sail" course will teach classroom Sailing Techniques.

For further information, call: (516) 757-7825 or 586-5813.

ALL CLUBS 1982 COD TOURNEY FOILED BY WEATHER

Due to high winds and rough seas on November 14 and 15, the All-Club Cod Tournament, sponsored this year by the Squaw Island Fishing Club, had to be cancelled for 1982.

The Awards Meeting was held on December 3, 1981, at the Moose Lodge in Massapequa. It was decided that the prizes would be raffled off among the participants. Since the prizes are broken up between club prizes and individual boat prizes, the raffle was held in the same way and the results were as follows:

Club Awards: Squaw Island Fishing Club; Suffolk Anglers; Squadron Anglers, and Babylon Tuna Club—Team II.

Boat Awards: Dolphin K—Squadron Anglers; Willie K—Bay Shore Tuna Club; Happy Hooker—Babylon Tuna Club Team II, and Queen Mary—Bay Shore Tuna Club.

Each of the prizes was a Penn International 50 Reel. Although there are usually three prizes in each category, the response this year was so great (41 boats representing 15 clubs), that there were sufficient funds to provide for four prizes in each category.

The Squaw Island Fishing Club wishes to thank all clubs and individuals whose interest in this tournament made it as successful as could be under the circumstances.

COURSE IN NAVIGATION AND SAFE BOATING

A course in Navigation and Safe Boating will be conducted at Brooklyn College, Boylan Hall, Rm. 1301, starting January 8, 1982. This series of lectures is sponsored by the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, Flotilla 11-6. Subjects covered include piloting, chart reading, compass, knots and splicing, rules of the road, seamanship, marine engines and marine radio procedures. At the conclusion of the course, certificates will be awarded to those achieving passing grades.

For further information, call Ronald Blicksilver, 399-8594.

LIBBA READYING FOR OPERATION CHRISTMAS TREE

The Long Island Beach Buggy Association has announced plans for their 1982 Operation Christmas Tree Project. It is slated to begin on Saturday, January 9th with members and volunteers asked to meet at Island Grill on the corner of Phyllis Drive and Sunrise Hwy., in Patchogue at 8AM. The project will continue on Sunday, January 10th and conclude the following weekend when the trees will be put in place on the dunes at Smith Point Park. All members are being asked to lend a hand and individuals or groups willing to help are urged to do so. For more information, contact Ed Wissenbach at 289-8136. Anyone interested in becoming a LIBBA member can write to: LIBBA, P.O. Box 101, Bayport, New York 11705.

AFTMA ISSUES STAND ON D/J TAX EXPANSION

The American Fishing Tackle Manufacturers Association (AFTMA) has issued a position paper on the controversial Dingell/Johnson program according to Thomas R. Schedler, AFTMA Executive vice president.

The position paper addresses many potential pitfalls and problems inherent in the proposed legislation to expand the Dingell/Johnson tax base to include all other fishing tackle items, plus certain boating products. Reasonable solutions for meeting the needs of the nation's fisheries—on both a short term and long term basis—are also proposed and discussed in this document.

AFTMA's position paper demonstrates that expansion of Federal excise taxes to additional fishing

tackle items and boating products is inflationary, counter-productive and premature. Schedler emphasized that there are a number of alternative solutions to the challenge of obtaining greater revenues for the fishery that are fairer and more equitable for all concerned.

CHUM LINES

PRAISE FOR TERRANOVA

Finally an article on how to open mussels by Sal Terranova. Just great. How about continuing now and have the same type of article on clams. I am the world's greatest butcher when it comes to opening clams for either eating or bait. I see sea gulls who have better technique than I. If Sal can teach us how to open mussels, I am sure he can do the same for clams. In fact if he wants to go one step further, include oysters also.

I do a great deal of fishing at Cape Cod. I have to bring my own clams with me for bait, and I always have to buy the frozen kind. I would love to be able to buy fresh and open them myself, or better yet, go clamming and really have fresh. I do dig a few although they are incidental to the ribbon worms I seek. By the way there is no better bait for flounder than those 2' long, almost half-inch diameter ribbon worms. Flounder eat them just like candy. Buttttt, are they hard to come by!

A few years ago when worm prices went out of sight, I switched to clam bait. It is interesting to note that while you don't catch as many flounder, the size is always better. Only the larger flounder seem to prefer clam. There are much fewer throwbacks. I remember the first time I used clam for striper at Nauset Beach. People came over to me on the beach and started berating me for having the audacity to use clam for bait. It was unbelievable.

I have been a subscriber now for five years; in fact, my anniversary date is April 1st. I want you to know that I feel there is no better publication than LIF for the fisherman. I still have every copy, some 250 and still use every one of them for reference. I have learned to snell my own hooks, tie my own bucktails and most important of all, catch more fish. I appreciate the advertisers and reciprocate by buying from them. The articles are most informative and certainly helpful. I fish Cape Cod, Outer Banks, N.C. and Florida in addition to locally. I thank you for publishing a most superior publication. Sincerely, *Julie Rashkover, Flushing, N.Y.*

GLOWKA OFFERS INFO ON FISHING CAMPS

Towards the end of last year we indicated in our *Fish Talk* column (in response to a reader question) that there were no fishing camps on Long Island for saltwater enthusiasts in the sense that camps exist for hockey, basketball, etc. Art Glowka, well known writer, fisherman, and environmentalist, sent us some information.

The Zebco Youth Fishing Program in Oklahoma, is offered as an example of what types of camps are available. We thank Art for this information because we know that freshwater fishing is experiencing renewed growth on Long Island (freshwater fishing is getting better, while saltwater fishing is declining—numbers of available fish to be caught on a given day) and thus many folks might be interested. The camps we've known about and been told about are *NOT* on Long Island and are geared primarily for freshwater fishing. Now, Garcia used to run saltwater clinics—not quite a camp or school but helpful nonetheless, and LIF is hopeful of heading ourselves in this direction. However, at this time, we cannot offer more specifics. *Dr. W.A. Muller.*

SURF ARTICLES FOR BEGINNERS

I am basically a fair fisherman and about to retire from my job.

I would like to graduate to surf casting, but I do not know much about it—tackle, lures, bait, etc.

How about publishing one or more articles for beginners? Also, is there a club or group of fishermen who would not mind accepting inexperienced enthusiasts? Thank you. *Camperra, Stony Brook, NY.*

We, at The Fisherman, are under the impression that we do publish surf fishing articles for the beginner. Our weekly articles on surf fishing are deliberately authorized to cover the subject from soup to nuts. Perhaps we do concentrate upon bass, blues, and weaks, but each year we try to have something on porgies, flounder, fluke, blackfish, etc. We try to offer articles that will interest the pro as well as some that deal with basic techniques, tackle, and locations where we might all catch a few. We have said this before and we believe it is still very true. A fisherman interested in "getting into" surf fishing should read as much as possible, should read as much as possible, should fish as hard and as often as possible, and should join a surf fishing club. Most clubs do not require any prior experience and seek only members who are eager to learn and eager to participate in club activities. Volunteering for club committees and projects is a sure way to bring you in contact with some of the more knowledgeable and experienced surf fishermen in the club. These associations will result in a rapid increase in your knowledge and

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your skills. Keep an eye out in our Club News *section for notices from surf clubs that they are accepting new members. In these winter months, my own club,* The High Hill Striper Club *is accepting applications. Call Tom Fitzsimmons at 516-487-7822.* Dr. William A. Muller.

WANTS BASIC HOW-TO

I am a newcomer in the fishing field. I enjoy The Fisherman mag very much.

In the coming season I would like to see the How-To section—how to rig up for varous fish, what hooks to use; what weight and type sinkers to use; what boat to use; how to bait up the hook. What type or kind of hardware to use such as snaps, 3-way swivels, split rings, etc. I am going to retire at the end of 1982 and would like to do some fishing in season; but, again, I say I am a greenhorn in this field. I have gone trolling for fluke out of Freeport several times in a rowboat and outboard motor. I have gone on party boats for fluke, but that was toward the end of the season, Sept. or Oct. That's all. Thank you. *G. Hoff, Brooklyn, NY.*

If you're a newcomer to fishing and to LIF, you're in luck. One of our purposes is to publish a wide variety of How-To articles. We begin the year with a heavy flurry of just the type of article you are looking for (Jan.-Feb.) However, we don't stop there! Throughout the season we publish how-to and where-to articles. There's a lot to learn about fishing, George, and we believe a good fisherman never stops learning. Now, if our winter how-to specials and our in-season how-to and where-to articles fail to satisfy your hunger, think about buying one or more of our softcover books. These books were authored by LIF staff personnel specifically for Long Island fishing and surround waters. These are: Fishing for Weakfish, Fishing for Flounder, and Fishing for Fluke. Dr. W.A.M.

HOW ABOUT THAT!

Believe it or not, it's true!!

September 3rd, fishing for weakfish off of Rose's Grove in Peconic Bay, my grandsons Eddie and Bill Coakley and myself. The snappers had the upper hand, taking off our strip squid baits as soon as we were on the bottom. As we were running low on bait, I put a red Jelly worm on. The tail of the jelly worm was also neatly taken off. At this point I suggested to the boys that if they wanted to fish some more, we had better get some more squid. I pulled the anchor and pulled into Wooley Pond to purchase bait.

We went back out and dropped anchor in approximately the same area. The snappers started working on us again. I would guess it was about an hour after dropping the anchor the second time that my grandson Bill, with a snapper hanging from his hook, said to me, "Look, he spit out a couple of small fish and a piece of your jelly worm." And that's what it was—the end of the jelly worm I had used a couple of hours earlier. *Herbert E. Suhr, Southampton, NY.*

P.S.—We did manage to sneak in six very respectable weaks between snappers. *H.E.S.*

Although events like the one you describe happen often enough, we still become amazed and so it should be. I can remember the story of a fella that caught a 38 lb. bass and in its mouth was another hook. When the angler pulled in the line it was attached to a rod and reel. It so happened that the rod and reel belonged to another fisherman a little bit down the beach who lost it the day before when a big fish took it into the water. Just this fall while fishing with a friend, who about an hour before lost a diamond jig and tube when he snagged bottom, I was a part of a huge coincidence. Well, I think you can figure it out. I snagged the bottom and when I pulled hard my hook broke free and when I retrieved it, there was my buddy's jig. We knew it was the same jig because he uses a tube color combo that is unique in all the world. In another case a friend caught a blue that when cleaned contained the plug of another friend—lost about an hour before the second guy caught the blue. We have often said that truth is stranger than fiction. Dr. W.A.M.

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— ROD BUILDING SERIES —

THE BASICS

Part One — *by C. Boyd Pfeiffer*

It's great when there are a lot of good reasons to justify a hobby or sport. Fishing, for example, is good recreation, often good exercise, keeps you in the great outdoors and often helps to reduce weekly food expenses with some fresh fish. Similarly, rod building—making rods that you will use to fish with—has a number of reasons that make it a great supplement to fishing.

It will save money, provide a great off-season hobby, and will allow you to make or customize tackle to your exact needs and fishing requirements.

Saving Money—If you are just going to add another rod to a growing collection, then the money saved is akin to your wife buying a $100 dress on sale for $70 and "saving" $30 in the process. You can't spend the saved money. But if you broke a rod, need one for your youngster, wife or for another type of fishing that you plan to do; in other words, if you are definitely going to get a rod—then the savings can be considerable. In these cases, you have to get a rod anyway.

And the savings of a custom built rod that you make yourself, versus a factory model of equivalent quality, can be from about 1/3 to 1/2. Thus, if a factory rod costs $100 (to use this hypothetical figure again), you can make the same rod for about $50 to $65. Considering that you need the rod and were going to get one anyway, that money saved is money in the bank.

Rod Building is Easy—Unfortunately a myth has grown up among some anglers that rod building is hard, requires special skills and tools and that the average angler just won't be able to produce quality tackle. Hogwash. Nothing is further from the truth. First-time rod builders, with a little time, care and attention to details and directions can make rods that are equal to or better than equivalent store models.

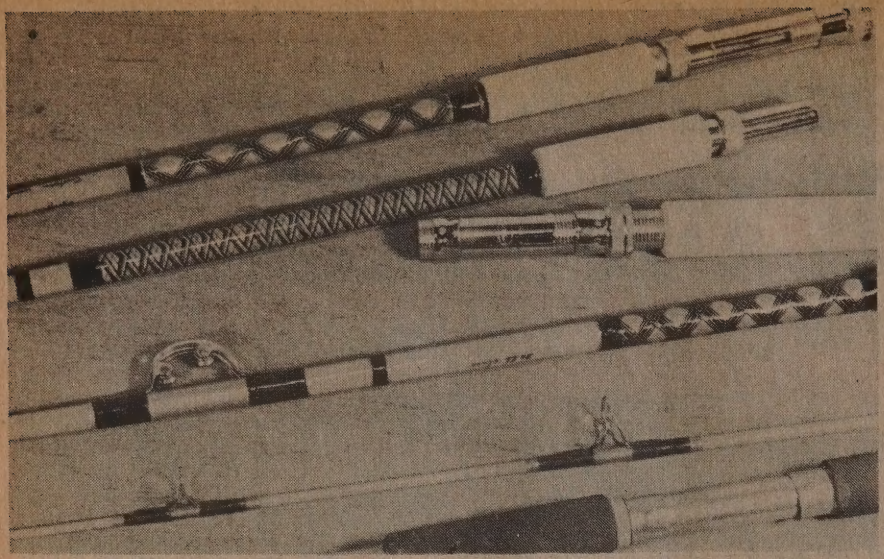
Rod building is really rod assembly, in that the only "skills" required are the fitting and gluing of parts onto the rod blank and the wrapping of guides. Most model kits that 10-year-old youngsters construct are far more difficult to build than any type of fishing rod.

Also, the basics of rod building applies to all rods. Gluing and fitting of handles, reel seats, butt caps, etc., is the same whether you are building

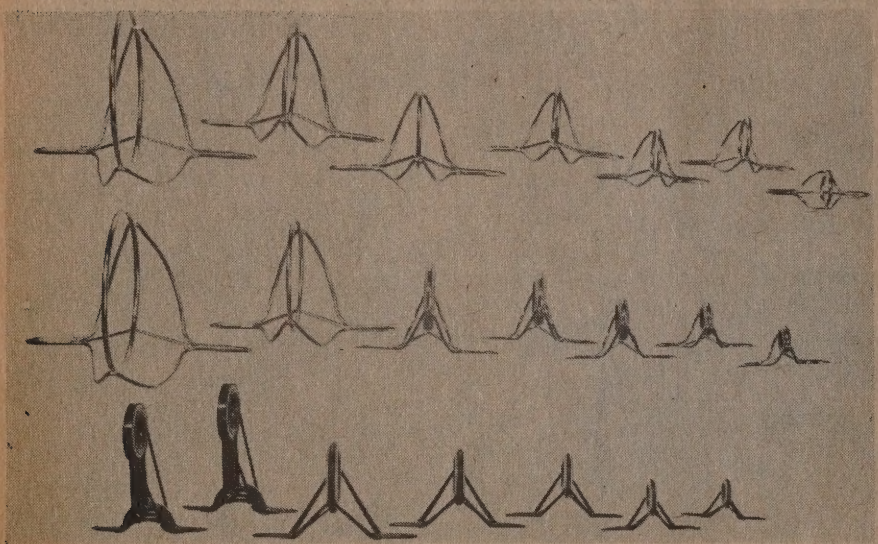
(Continued on next page.)

Rod building is easy and there are numerous parts and supplies available for anglers to make their own tackle. Here, Greg Clem, general manager of Tackle Crafters, selects some guides for a customer from the many bins of all types of guides available.

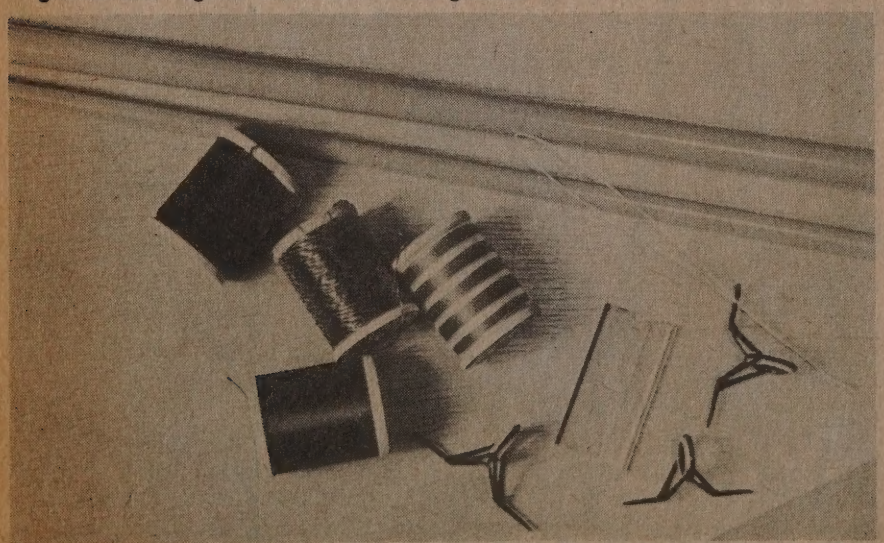
Rod blanks available come in all sizes, styles, types, finishes, colors and actions. Here, Greg Clem looks over a rod blank from among those of one manufacturer available at Tackle Crafters.



Beautifully wrapped rods like these are possible to make by any angler or rod builder, following simple instructions and taking care with each step and procedure in rod building.



Guides are available in sets or individually. Here, individually sold guides have been made up into sets for surf rods. Top, a set of guides of wire rings; center, a set with large wire ring guides and smaller guides of aluminum oxide; and bottom, a set of guides including fold-down butt guides and regular aluminum oxide guides.



All that is really needed to make any rod are the parts including a rod blank, guides, and handle materials and a spool of thread to wrap the guides. Loop is used to pull through the thread wrap to finish it, and the razor blade to cut the thread.

a light fly rod, medium casting rod, heavy boat or trolling rod. The guide wraps, by which the guides are held in place on the rod blank is a simple job that is the same for all guides from 1/0 snakes on a fly rod to heavy roller guides on a big game IGFA rod.

Customizing Tackle—One of the joys of rod building is that all rods can be custom made to your own specifications and requirements. Let's suppose that you like a particular factory rod, but you don't like the color of the thread wraps, would like one more or one less guide, would prefer the handle reversed on the grip, would like a longer or shorter grip, or would like a different type of guide. In all cases, it is possible to get the parts, or components they are usually called, and build the rod exactly as you wish.

In most cases, it is possible to get the same rod blank that the factory rod is built on to duplicate the action and power in your custom built rod. Rod and rod blank manufacturers such as Fenwick, Lamiglas, Loomis and others have blanks available that are identical to those used on their factory rods usually with the same model numbers or a conversion chart. The result is that you can get a rod with the same action as the one you tried in a store, sport show, or saw a friend fishing with, only built to your specifications and needs.

The basics of rod building are really very simple, as previously mentioned. First, a rod consists of various parts, all of which must be assembled into the finished rod. These parts consist of the following:

ROD BLANK: This is the "rod before it is a rod"—the bare blank of glass, graphite, boron, or other materials or mixtures of materials. Hundreds of different styles, lengths, actions, power, etc., are available from about a dozen manufacturers. Manufacturers of popular blanks include Loomis, Lamiglas, Fenwick, Rodon, Shakespeare (Ugly Stik and others), Dynaflex, Scott, Fisher, and Sage.

HANDLES: Handles are available in several forms. First, handles are sometimes called grips, which would mean only that part which you hold; while handles can also refer to complete handle-reel seat combinations, such as are available for casting, spin-cast, and boat or trolling rods. In general handles (grips) that are glued onto the rod blank, as in spinning, fly, surf, and popping rods, are made from cork or synthetic materials like hypalon or cellite. The synthetics are formed and only have to be pushed on the blank and glued in place.

Pre-formed cork handles are available in a lot of different styles and lengths for spinning, boat and fly rods. These, too, are glued in place on the blank. Some anglers like to make their own grips from individual cork rings, which are glued on the rod blank and to each other to form a cork cylinder which is then shaped and sized with rasp, file, and sandpaper.

REEL SEATS: Reel seats are available in many different styles and in aluminum, graphite and chrome brass for different fishing applications. Usually aluminum reel seats are used on freshwater tackle, while chrome plated brass is used on saltwater tackle for its additional resistance to corrosion from saltwater.

Reel seats are glued in place on the rod, generally by using a bushing between the rod blank and the reel seat to make up for the difference in diameter of the rod blank and larger reel seat. In some cases, as in one piece boat rods and surf rods, the rod blank is large enough for the reel seat to be glued directly onto the blank without a bushing.

GUIDE AND TIPTOPS: Guides are available in many styles to meet the individual requirements of each fishing rod and tackle outfit. Some guide choices are fairly obvious. Snake guides, for example, are standard for fly rods, while rollers are a must for big game offshore trolling and IGFA type rods. In-between this, surf, spinning, casting, spin cast and popping rods use ringed guides with the ring made of chromed steel or with an aluminum oxide inner ring.

Guides with the inner aluminum oxide ring are the best and are made by Perfection Tip, Fuji, Varmac, and Mildrum. They provide additional smoothness and frictionless casting, and are hard enough to be almost impossible to cut even with a file. Most guides have two feet, although some single foot guides are available from Fuji, Perfection and Varmac that are designed for ultra-light rods.

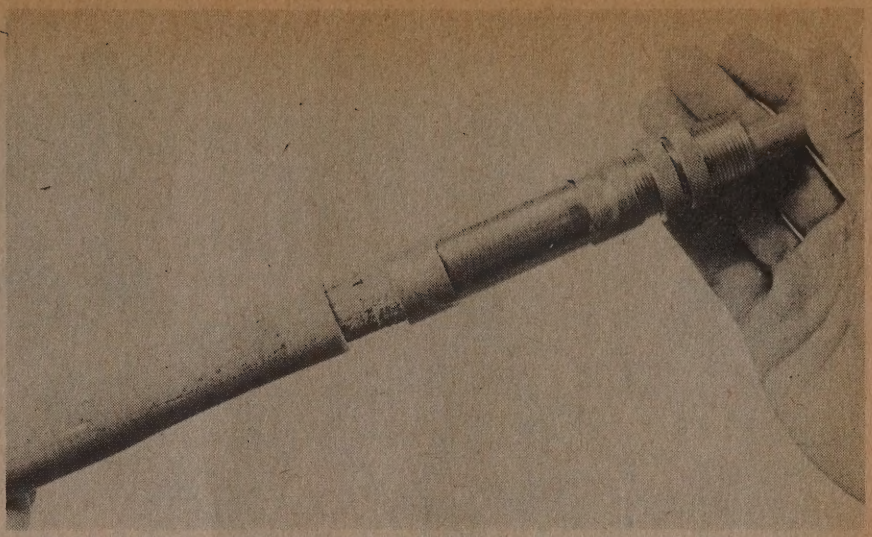
Guides should be chosen for the type of rod, and the type of fishing. For example, you might use the same type of guide for both spinning and casting rods, but would have to choose large diameter guides for the spinning rod to funnel the line properly, whereas smaller guides would be fine for the casting outfit.

BUTT CAP: These are nothing more than small caps or plates designed to protect the end of the rod handle from wear and damage.

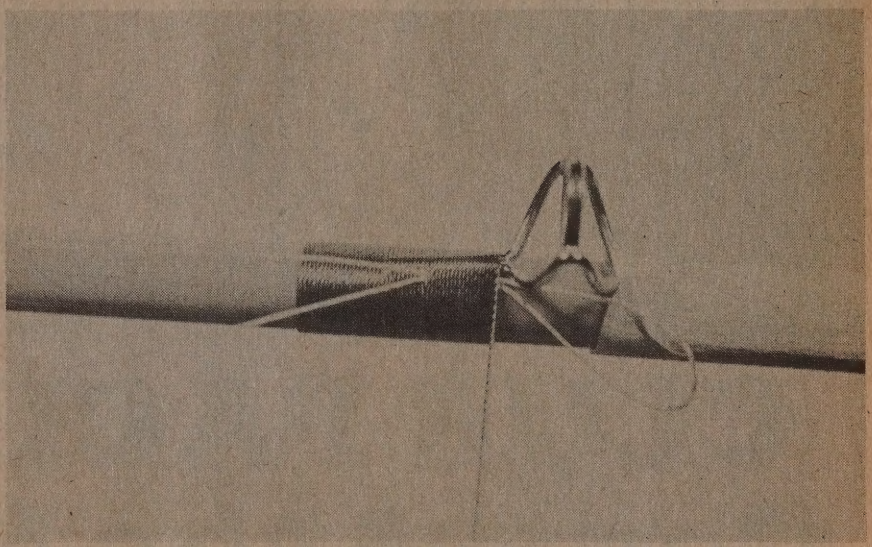
WINDING CHECK: This slips over the rod blank to seat against the forward end of the handle and to make for a finished, professional appearance. They are not really needed on rods with hypalon or synthetic grips, but should be used with cork grips to cover any imperfections that might occur in the hole in the cork handle.

The above are all the parts that make up a rod. Converting them from a pile of parts to a finished rod is simpler than assembling the kids' Christmas toys on Christmas Eve. Unlike many other crafts and hobbies, it requires no special skills, knowledge or learning other than a basic homeowner's skill in fixing things around the house. How it all goes together will be the subject of the rest of this series.

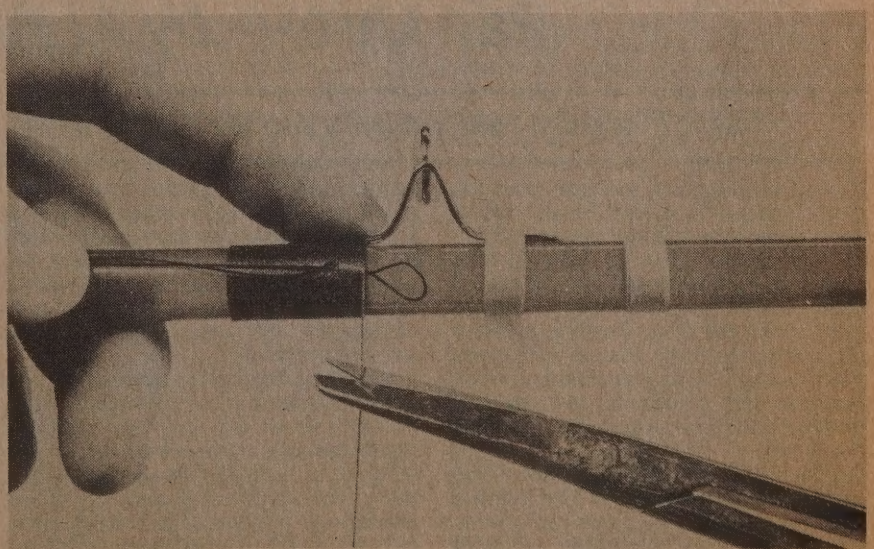
NEXT WEEK: TOOLS FOR ROD BUILDING.



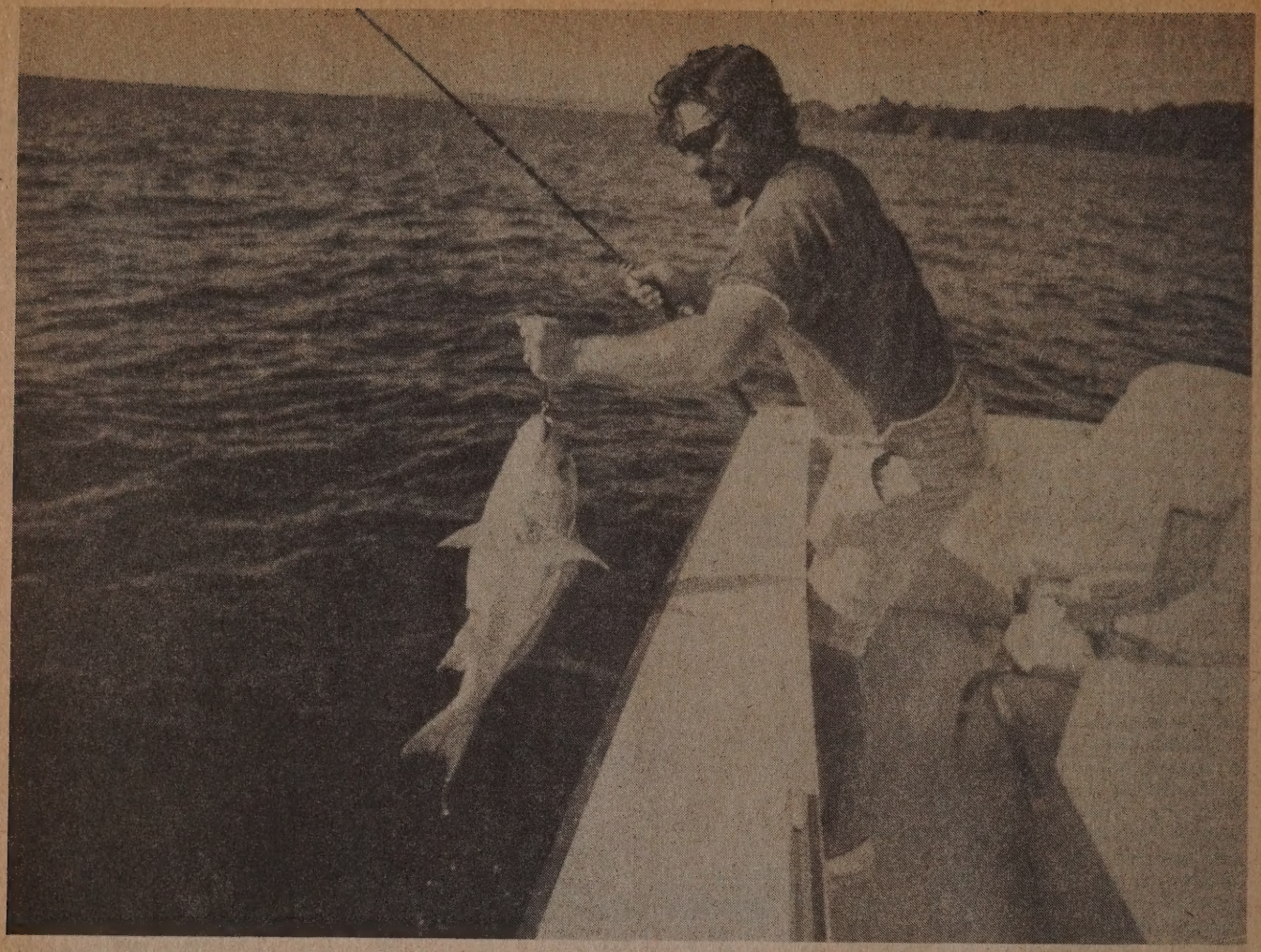
Rod building is really only rod assembly, as shown here by this reel seat being glued onto a bushing above a rod handle. Simple assembly of these parts is the hardest aspect of rod building, since the rod wraps are simple and are the same for all types of guides on all types of rods.



Guide wraps are simple in that the thread is wrapped around the blank and over the guide foot and finished by pulling the end of the thread through a loop which has been wrapped over at the end of the wrap as shown here. Detailed instructions and photos in Part VI of series.



Finishing a guide wrap by cutting the end of the thread which will be placed through the loop and pulled through to secure the end of the thread on the guide wrap.



CLUB PACIFICO: Gem of the Pacific

Part One — *by Al Ristori*

"Club Pacifico really steals the spotlight when it comes to casting."

It's been my good fortune over the past couple of decades to travel over a good part of the globe in search of the ultimate in game fishing. I don't think I've found that spot yet—or at least, I hope I haven't. Anticipation is a large part of the thrill of fishing, and we always like to think that there's even better ahead of us. However, until I discover my piscatorial Mecca, I'll gladly settle for Club Pacifico de Panama.

When it comes to that combination of factors that ensures a fine fishing trip—good weather, large and plentiful fish, a variety of species, pleasant surroundings, a well-run camp—Club Pacifico has it all. I've never been to another camp which could fill the bill completely throughout even their prime season. Bad weather is a factor to be considered almost everywhere, and many areas just don't have the variety of fishing necessary to sustain interest when the primary quarry disappears (or gets lockjaw) on the week you arrive.

Club Pacifico de Panama is located on Coiba Island, SW of Panama City. It takes about one hour by plane to reach the island, at which point you settle down into a prison camp. That's right, your only neighbors on Coiba (Panama's Alcatraz) are long term prisoners—but you're safer there than at home. The prison camp isn't very attractive. The side of the island facing the mainland is hot and dry during the winter, and the red dust settles over everything. However, it's a pretty good deal for the inmates, who are able to wander about on their own and are often assigned to farms or logging operations spread around the large island. Unless the tide is up, you may have to wade through some mud to get to the boats that will take you to Club Pacifico—but the scenery will change very rapidly after that.

The camp is tucked into a cove on the NE tip of the island, in a setting right out of a storybook. The fine sand beach would be bragged about by any chamber of commerce, and the facilities leave nothing to be desired—if you came for the fishing. There's no golf course or tennis courts, but there

are comfortable, air conditioned rooms, a large lounge, a dining room, and a thatch-roofed patio and bar area. The latter isn't enclosed, as there are no bugs to bother you under ordinary conditions. During the rainy season there are some sand fleas at dusk, but the camp does most of its business during the winter—when it's bone dry.

Indeed, the weather may be the best selling point for Club Pacifico. It's not only very good, but also amazingly consistent. There is virtually no chance of even a shower during the dry season (January to April), except during the last couple of weeks of that period. Furthermore, the seas are exceptionally calm. If there is a wind, it's usually from the east; and the best dry season fishing is on the other side of the island. Furthermore, the island seems to break up the wind so that it doesn't even affect you on Hannibal Bank, which is well offshore. During the rainy season the wind shifts around, but that leaves the east side calm and the fishing there is even better for many species.

Club Pacifico is hard to beat when it comes to variety. It would take no great effort to catch two dozen species in a week, and many of them would be quite large. The trolling, jigging, and big game fishing is outstanding, but Club Pacifico really steals the spotlight when it comes to casting. Whether from beach or boat, I love to cast with appropriately heavy tackle to fish that are quite capable of beating me on that gear. If that's what you enjoy, then this is the place to do it. Most of the vast shore line is rugged, and there are so many good places to cast to that the guides rarely stop long enough to work any one spot. If your first cast doesn't raise a fish, they're off to another.

The casting is even better on the many underwater reefs found around Coiba and adjacent islands. On several occasions I've had dozens of fish of several species chasing my plug on the reef off Jicaron Island. The water seems to turn red behind the lure as they fight to destroy the intruder. The red coloration is provided by the mullet and cubera snappers, which are usually joined by jack crevalle, cobalt jacks, horse-eye jacks, and occasional amberjacks. If you get as big a thrill as I do when a jumbo striper boils behind a plug or a couple of bluefish battle over a lure, you can imagine what a heart-stopper it is to see perhaps 50 fish in pursuit! It takes nerves of steel just to keep the lure working as you exclaim "Do you see that?"

Just because there are lots of fish for plugging at Club Pacifico doesn't mean that they're easy to catch. The snappers have an affinity for the bottom and will frequently cut you off before you have a chance to turn the handle. The smaller, abundant mullet snappers aren't too bad in this respect. They have scales and a body shape similar to that of a mullet, and

Ed Graser with a 25 lb. class cubera snapper plugged at Club Pacifico.

usually weigh from 5 to 10 lbs. Though larger specimens aren't too common on the inshore reefs, I've seen them up to about 25 lbs. on Hannibal Bank. At that offshore bank, they frequently rise to the surface to feed on baitfish or tiny crabs. The red spot they create can be seen from quite a distance, and they'll usually hit lures thrown to them. Mullet snappers are strong fighters, but usually overpowered by the gear being used for larger fish.

The king of cut-off artists is the cubera snapper. This stubby, copper-colored bulldog has some big mean-looking teeth that catch your eye as they come up behind a surface plug. Cuberas are extremely aggressive and will take a very fast moving lure. Their initial reaction is to head right back to where they came from and most large specimens do just that, leaving the angler with a broken line and a permanent case of "Did you see the size of that sucker!" Cuberas are loners, or found in an area with just a few others of their kind—though there be many other game fish in the same area. Frequently it's impossible to fish through the other species to get to them; but if a cubera is really turned on nothing will stop him.

On normal tackle you've got a pretty good shot at 15 to 25 lb. cuberas. However, those in the 25 to 60 lb. class will almost invariably break you off. By trial and error, I've come up with both the rigging and technique that will provide a fair shot at these super-tough fish. I use standard surf gear—both spinning and conventional. The rods are 9' heavy action models, and I use heavy-duty reels on them. The spinners I favor are the discontinued Mitchell 498 (with manual roller pick-up) and the Penn 550 SS, but any large, quality reel with a very good

(Continued on next page.)

roller guide will do. For conventional casting I like the Ambassadeur 8600 or 9000, or the Shimano Triton II. The Penn Jigmaster will also do the job nicely. On the spinners I use 20 to 25 lb. test mono, while the conventionals take 25 to 30 lb. The end of the line is doubled with a Bimini Twist, and about three feet of 80 lb. leader material is tied to the double line with an Albright Knot. That rigging provides 100% strength throughout and allows the anglers to exert maximum pressure.

Drag setting is simple: just screw it down almost all the way! If you don't stop the cubera right away he's almost always going to break you off anyway, so there's no need to worry about breaking your line in the process. Even that won't do you any good if you can't control when the fish hits. With a long line out, the cubera can dive to bottom no matter how tight your drag is. Therefore, it's vital that you take the plug away from him until he's closer to the boat and in deeper water. The dropoffs are sharp, so a matter of just a few yards can make the difference between ten feet and ten fathoms. If the cubera just explodes on the plug, there's nothing you can do about it. However, they more often come up behind the lure before striking. At that point you should speed up your retrieve and try to take it away from him. Rarely will they leave the lure, and they'll usually hit it as soon as you slow it just a bit. Do that when you've shortened up your line—and then hang on for dear life as the big fish dives. If you've gotten him into deep enough water, you should be all right—if the hooks don't straighten out or pull out of the plug!

If you think that the tackle I've described is a little heavy for some of the fish I've mentioned—you're right. If I knew I'd only be catching mullet snappers and jacks, I'd use something lighter. However, the chance for a 50 lb. cubera or amberjack is what really makes this fishing exciting. In addition, you'll be able to catch and release the smaller fish in a shorter time and get back to the business of trying to hook a lunker. Another reason for the heavy gear is the abundance of sharks on the reefs. Play a fish too long and you'll just be feeding him to the toothy ones!

I use nothing but popping plugs for this casting. Only fast moving lures are effective in the crystal-clear waters, and the more commotion they create, the better. Southern anglers prefer chuggers (which are worked in big sweeps), but I use Pencil Poppers made by Cordell, Gibbs, and Lunsider—or such standard poppers as the Cordell Near Nuthin, Atom Striper Swiper, and Gibbs Polaris. The jacks usually run from about 6-15 lbs. and are just as rugged fighters as those found in the Atlantic. The cobalt jack is a uniquely colored species that I've encountered only in this portion of the Pacific. Other species encountered by casters include the acrobatic houndfish, Pacific barracuda, rock snappers, rainbow runners, dolphin, bonito, and even sailfish.

The one important casting species not already mentioned is the beautiful roosterfish. This outstanding fighting fish is found on some of the inshore reefs, as well as along the many beaches on the west and south sides of Coiba. Until recently, not very many were caught, but now the best locations are well-known and those wishing to concentrate on roosterfish can do so. You probably won't get as much action as you otherwise would, and you'll certainly have a lot harder time in trying to get the fish to hit. Roosterfish will charge right up to a lure with such wild abandon that anglers often strike before they hit. Yet, most of the time they'll put on the brakes and just follow the lure back to the boat. Since they're often found over open bottom, you can use lighter tackle for roosterfish. Most of those hooked at Club Pacifico run from about 10-25 lbs., but Frank Sargant caught a 42 lber. on 12 lb. mono and camp owner Bob Griffin has taken one of over 50 lbs. on light tackle. This isn't quantity fishing, but just watching that cockscomb slicing through the water toward your plug is enough of a thrill to make a day complete! In Part II, we will examine the offshore potential available at this Panamanian Paradise.

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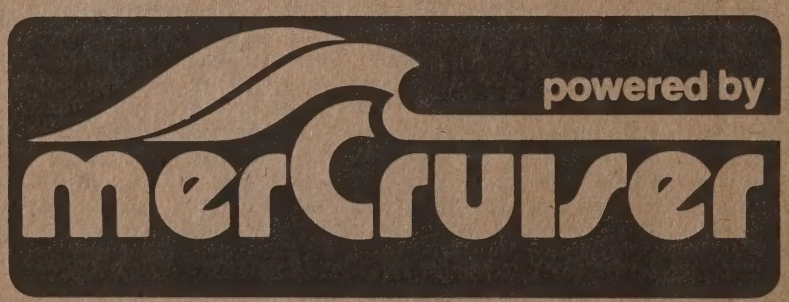

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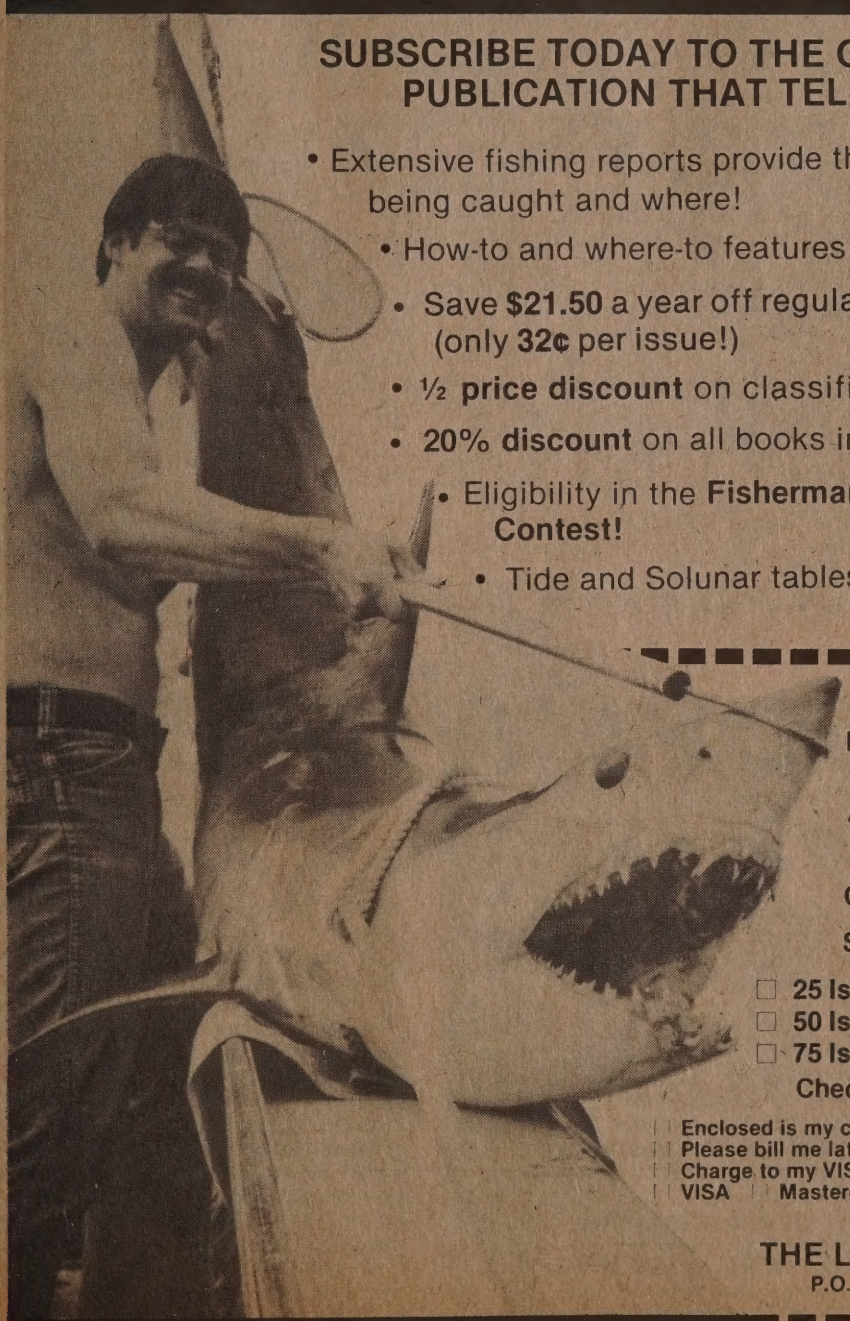

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Rainbow Winter

by Dick Mermon

During the winter months, many saltwater anglers abandon their fishing tackle for a comfortable location in front of the television (except for a few hardy cod fishermen), but freshwater sportsmen head for Pulaski, New York and the renowned Salmon River. Here, attention is directed towards the mighty steelhead trout, king of winter angling. Because of coloration and its annual migratory return to the area of its alleged birth, the rainbows of Lake Ontario are called "steelhead."

This fantastic winter fishery actually began in 1968, when the State's Department of Environmental Conservation realized the potential of duplicating the successful Lake Michigan Fishery in Lake Ontario. With coho and chinook salmon programs already taking hold here, as it did in Michigan, why not add rainbows to the menu. So, in the spring of '71, ten thousand fingerling steelhead trout were flown in from the State of Washington and released in New York's Salmon River. Within three years, the growth rate of these fish was unbelieveable (up to 4 lbs.). This proved there was sufficient forage within the lake for all three species to survive, but one disappointment arose in the form of non-reproduction of the fish naturally. The river and its tributaries offer little native spawning habitat, for the bottom sustains mostly shale rock, with a high mineral content in the water. Hence, if rainbows were to survive, there must be a continuous planting of fingerlings and yearlings. To this date, the Lake Ontario area receives between thirty to fifty thousand in alternate year stockings of yearling steelheads.

Steelhead fishing in the Salmon River is available and permitted throughout the year for anglers holding valid New York State fishing licenses. Most of these fish range from 4 to 20 lbs., with an average fish of about 8 lbs. Primary migration of the steelhead is not when the salmon

are returning into the river, but after it is over. Salmon sometimes begin their spawning run during the latter part of August, lasting well into November. At such time, rainbows, basically smaller in size (called jacks) are not there to do their thing but to feed on salmon eggs as they are deposited. That is why salmon eggs are the main bait employed by anglers. Optimal time for quality steelhead fishing ranges from December to the middle, and even the end of March. Usually, February has a mild trend of weather, lasting for slightly over a week and it is at such time when some rather large fish are taken. Most often these fish are hooked and lost either because of ice floats, cold hands, or frozen guide rings. During the four-month period between December and March, fish of 20 lbs. can be landed. In fact, the New York State record for steelhead trout is 22 lbs. 9 oz., which struck a plastic sponge saturated with steelhead egg juice.

The Town of Pulaski, the center of most activity, is very easy to reach via auto by the New York Thruway. Take Exit 32 to Rome, then Rt. 69 to Camden, which intersects Rt. 13 northwest. This highway parallels the river at Altmar and passes several parking areas designated by the State DEC, where an angler may leave his car safely and fish the river. Route 13 follows the river and ends at Lake Ontario, passing through Pulaski. The Town is so fishermen-conscious that it issues a map for anyone seeking information. This map lists the best locations to fish and park. There are at least two sport shops that cater to winter rainbow anglers: D&D Sporting Goods, Danny Delekta (315) 736-6009 and the Salmon River Sport Shop, (315) 298-4343.

The Salmon River is not just another run-of-the-mill stream. It can be treacherous and caution is advised when fishing it for the first time, especially in the cold weather. Many an angler has bounced with the current a short stretch because of unsure footing. Since the river begins as a waterfall over a lower dam, its level of flow is totally controlled by an electric power generating station that supplies electricity to the city of Syracuse. In demand for power, the turbines are cranked up and water drawn from the reservoir to cool them. As more units are required, more water is taken in from the lake and then expelled into the river bed causing it to levitate quickly. Any fisherman feeling the sudden surge of water (it can also be heard rushing over the rocks) should immediately retreat towards the shore line. The banks are steeply cut where the river had eroded them and trees overhang extensively. Posted along the banks are signs warning anglers of the dangers just described.

An interesting factor involving the steelhead activity lies within this upsurge of water. At normal flow, the

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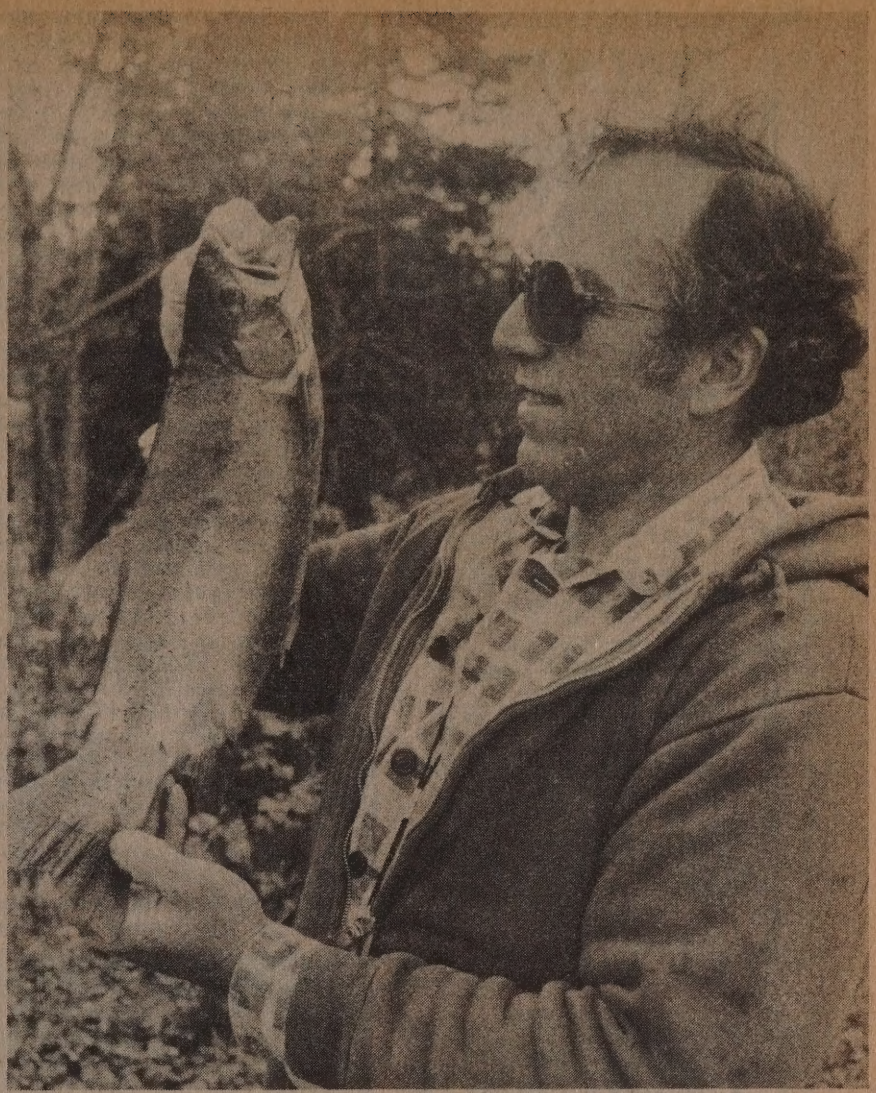


This seven pounder displayed by Wheeler Muller is typical of Salmon River steelhead.

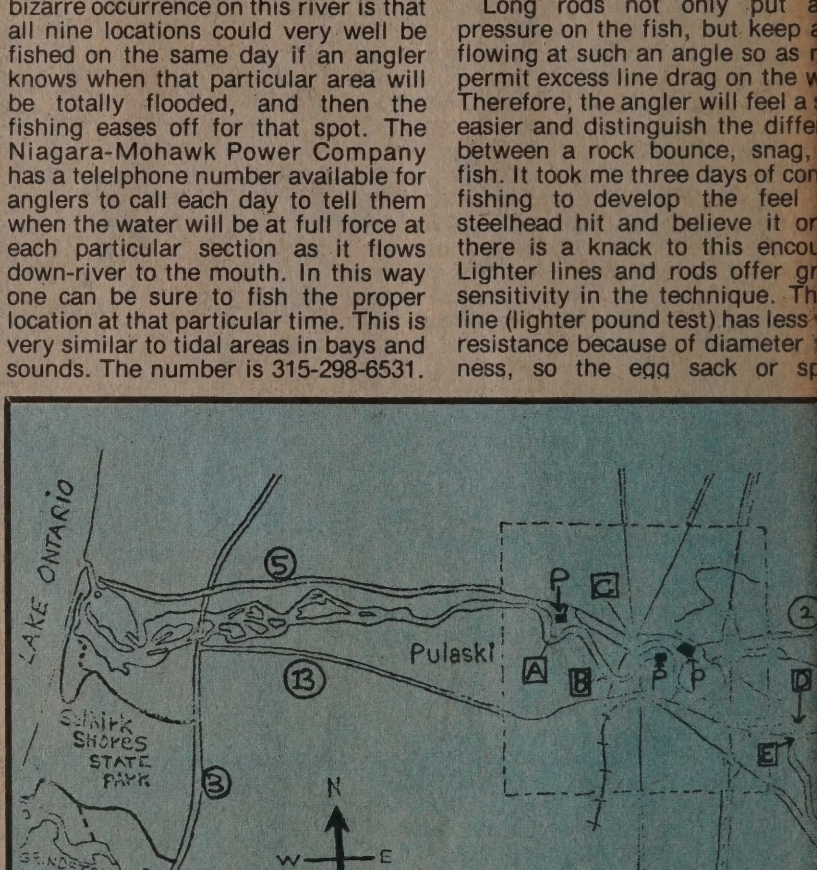
This is cold weather fishing and at times, shore ice must be broken so that the main current can be fished properly.

river can be waded safely, having few deep locations where trout hide, or where one would think a big fish would not dare to hide. Also, at such time these trout seldom feed, but when influenced by outlet surges, the pools become rejuvenated with new oxygen causing the fish to become vibrant. These onrushes also wash eggs downstream in eddies that rainbows can now reach.

Although there are nine main fishing locations, the most popular is called "Sportsman's Hole." A 100-yard long stretch of flat water and 75 yards wide, it is impassable even when low because it maintains a depth of about ten feet. Each end has rapids that are mere trickles until the flow is full bore, when they become total white water. Other known hotspots are Altmar School, Black Hole and Railroad Bridge Pool. The bizarre occurrence on this river is that all nine locations could very well be fished on the same day if an angler knows when that particular area will be totally flooded, and then the fishing eases off for that spot. The Niagara-Mohawk Power Company has a telelphone number available for anglers to call each day to tell them when the water will be at full force at each particular section as it flows down-river to the mouth. In this way one can be sure to fish the proper location at that particular time. This is very similar to tidal areas in bays and sounds. The number is 315-298-6531.

Moderate weight spinning tac best for these steelheads. S twelve pound test line and rods 6½' to 9' in length are favored. local anglers have converted graphite 8' or 9' fly rods into s rods. Full of spit and vinegar, fish in recent years have busted improperly designed rods. Cu rod builders have been utilizin Ugly Stik fly rod and empl spinning guides on it. A rainb first action when hooked is to clear of the water, then downstream on a hundred touchdown run, jump again, ch direction, and bore past the ang fast as possible. If the fish doe free itself with this slack line, it cross current and takes off wit flow once more. If not stopped time, it may pass through the and that is the end.

Long rods not only put pressure on the fish, but keep flowing at such an angle so as permit excess line drag on the Therefore, the angler will feel a easier and distinguish the diffe between a rock bounce, snag, fish. It took me three days of co fishing to develop the feel steelhead hit and believe it o there is a knack to this encou Lighter lines and rods offer g sensitivity in the technique. Th line (lighter pound test) has less resistance because of diameter ness, so the egg sack or s



Legend

(A) Blackhole - Access on north side of river via Bridge St. from Co
(B) Long Bridge Pool - Access on north side of river via S. Jefferso
(C) Short Bridge Pool - Access from north or south on Rt. 11 in Vill
(D) Railroad Bridge Pool - Access on north side of river via Co. Rt.
(E) Papermill Pool - Access on north side of river via Co. Rt. 2A.
(F) Sportsman's Pool - Access on north side from parking area on Cen side from parking area on Rt. 13.
(G) Old Railroad Bridge Pool - Access on north side from parking are Sheepskin Rd., and on south side from parking area at intersecti
(H) School House Pool - Access from Co. Rt. 52 and from parking lot Altmar.
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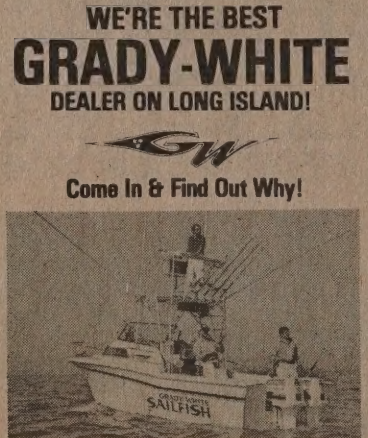

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vels freely and more natural. The is merely a tiny three-way swivel ached to the line at one eye. The ier ring supports a four inch length leader material, lighter in test than line itself, so it will break off when agged. In this fishing hangups are her frequent, so sufficient terminal kle is necessary. On this short gth, split shots are pinched on to ep the bait along the bottom. mber and size of shot depends on line drag and water current, but ere must be adequate lead to intain bottom contact. The third e of the swivel supports another gth of mono 15'' to 24'' long, in the me pound test as the line itself. ere a #6 or #8 hook is secured and an g sack or saturated sponge is paled. Should anglers not have eir own eggs or sponges, they may purchased from local tackle shops ar the river.

Just casting the rig upcurrent and owing it to bounce bottom is not the oper way to present the bait. The gle of cast should be 45° across rrent and not too far out. Distance not vital, but rod height is. The rod ust be held upright, tip pointing to e sky, keeping a straight, taut line m tip to sack. The hit is but a slight on the rod tip, or may come as at is thought to be a snag where e line abruptly stops. At such a time e hook is instantly set, for these elies in cold water only mouth a ck, crush it, and expel it in an instant. My first try at winter rainbows proved that I could set the hook on 200 snags before being able to tell the difference between bottom and a hit. One thing is for certain: you know instantly when a fish is hooked and when it is solid rock.

As for weather, and what clothes to wear—not only is the air temperature cold, but so is the water. Quality long underwear, wool socks (electric socks are even better), booties similar to that of Woods Down Booties, or even a pair of divers booties, a pair of good waders and a belt to go around the waist are required. Water temperature will be somewhere near the freezing mark, so ice forms overnight in the quiet pockets. Anglers must then push this shore ice into the current so they are able to fish without these razor sharp hazards to contend with.

Is it all worth the time, effort and expense to fish winter rainbow trout? You bet! There is an adventure here beyond any imagination, almost indescribable. Sometimes we live within our own prefabricated bubble, never realizing what goes on just a short distance away. One usually assumes trout of six to ten inches, when speaking of freshwater species, but times have changed. These very same anglers who used to think small and put their tackle away after September are landing fish up to 20 lbs. because they, too, have made it a ''rainbow winter.''

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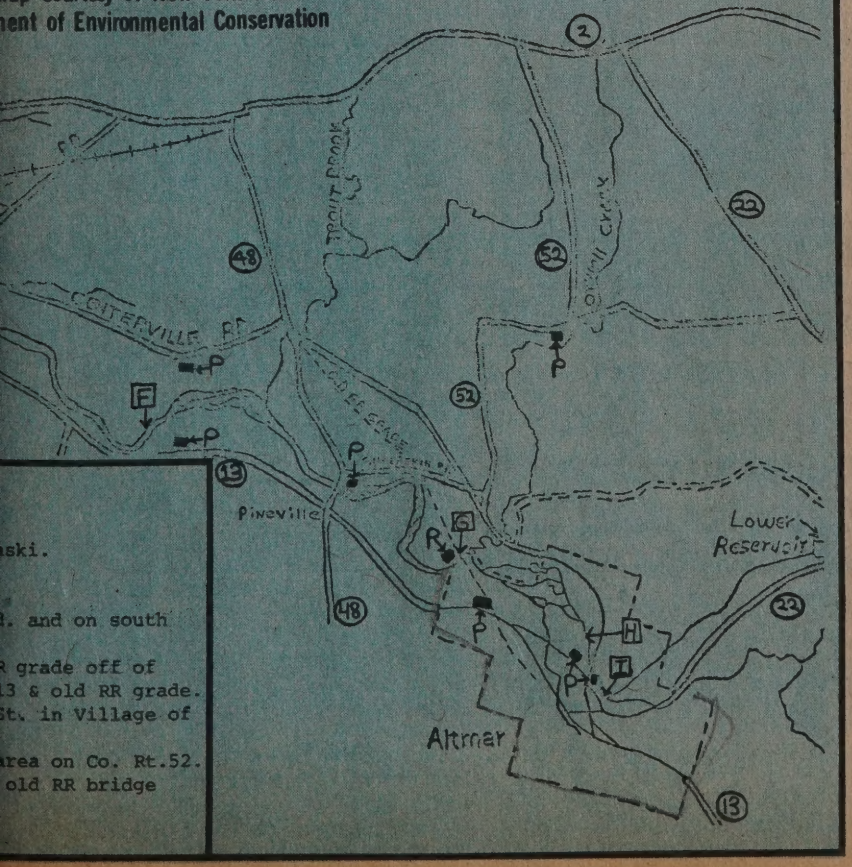

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RELIABLE REDFISH

by Pete Barrett

"Our best shot will be with redfish," advised Captain Gary Register. "The bonefishing hasn't been real good lately, but I've been getting into redfish in fairly good numbers back near Flamingo."

With that, we began the half hour run across the flats and through the maze of barely marked channels of Florida Bay, finally sliding up on the grassy flat just off Palm Key. Gary was right. Redfish were there in good numbers and despite a cloudy day that made the fish tough to spot before they spooked too close to the boat, we still managed to make a decent catch of fish.

A cold snap had put the bonefishing at a standstill, yet the water was still warm enough to be comfortable for the reds; a situation that occurs frequently during the cooler months in the Florida Keys. The better redfishing usually occurs from late summer until late fall. Yet the fish are often found in reasonably good numbers all year, especially during winter and spring warm spells.

For several years, the schools of reds seemed to be slowly decreasing in size in the Glades and Florida Bay, but may now be experiencing an upward trend in population. Commercial pressure has been reduced and even sport anglers are now more likely to be releasing part of their catch.

A moving tide is usually desirable. Back country fishermen of the Ten Thousand Islands areas like Chokaloskee and Marco Island often feel the falling tide is best. Other anglers feel a rising tide is even better. Most guides I've talked with and fished with have usually preferred the falling tide; but you make the best of whatever tide you have.

On the Keys flats you can often see the fish tailing as they stick their snouts into the soft, grassy bottom looking for crabs and other fish pleasing food. In the back country much of the casting may be blind to areas where tide creeks or channels form, holding fish because of the slightly deeper water. The edges of shoals, oyster beds and bars are also good areas.

"Reds have poor eyesight, so it's very important to get a shrimp tipped bucktail close to their nose."

Sight fishing can be the most exciting part of redfishing. The reddish-bronze tails can be seen for a considerable distance, and like bonefish, they will also give themselves away with muds, cloudy water caused by their rooting in the bottom.

Reds have generally poor eyesight, so it's very important to get a shrimp-tipped bucktail very close to their nose. The trick is to cast slightly beyond the fish, re-engaging the reel and cranking line just before the bucktail hits the water. This will keep the bug from sinking the few inches into the grass. It will also be readily visible so you can speed up or slow down the retrieve to put the lure right on the money in front of the fish's eye. If he doesn't see it too well, his sharp nose should still home in on the piece of shrimp on the bucktail hook.

Short striking redfish can drive you nuts! When you run into a school of fish that persistently short-strikes the bucktails, trim the length of hair to just hide the bend of the hook. They'll still strike the lure at the very tail end, but now they'll feel the sting of the hook.

When the water is too deep to spot tailing fish, you can cast blind to muds hoping to interest fish you can't see. In the back country, and on the flats, redfish will sometimes give themselves away as they move near the surface pushing a wake. A small school of reds will push a lot of water when moving in a hurry. Cast ahead of the wake and twitch the bucktail slowly.

Fishing the edge of a "snooky" looking mangrove cove up in Whitewater Bay, we came upon a large number of reds. As the tide fell and the current pulled bait out of the tiny

mangrove channel, the reds were pushing water back and forth as they went on a feeding spree. Bucktails didn't work at all, but a Johnson Silver Minnow spoon did—and very well, too. We nailed eight reds in a matter of twenty minutes, releasing all but two and all were caught on the spoon.

Along Sanibel, behind Pine Island, redfish are often caught on the same popping style rigs usually reserved for trout. A shrimp is drifted along the edges of the mangroves and occasionally the cork is popped to create a disturbance the reds come to investigate. This method is also used by several of the Chokaloskee Guides in the cooler months when the fish just don't seem to want to hit a bucktail, spoon or a lure.

Redfish are a relatively easy mark for flyrodders and are an ideal target if you aren't too polished a caster. They don't spook as quickly as bonefish and their size makes them handily battled on a basic fly outfit. Red don't run off a hundred yards of line like a bone, so expensive reels are not necessary. A rod that can handle a #8 or #9 weight forward floating line and a single action reel is fine for reds. Flies should be light colored so you can see them easily on the retrieve and they should be tied on the keel type hook or Palmer style. The Hackle Fly, or miniature flies similar to a tarpon hackle pattern are excellent choices to keep weeds from fouling the hook.

Popping bugs will work at times; but other times they spook the fish at the first splash. Small poppers can be cast on very light spinning tackle, a technique that worked very well for us once in Coot Bay near the end of the canal. We fooled three very small reds in only a half dozen casts by twitching a small white popper slowly along the edge of a large fallen tree. Because of the underslung mouth of a red, the fish were nearly sticking their entire heads above the water to grab the lure!

Reds aren't known as fabulous fighters, perhaps because they are most often compared to other flats fish like bonefish, tarpon or larger jacks. Taken on their own merits, however, the redfish does have a style all their own that shows a strong determination to get rid of the annoying hook. The runs are short, but powerful. At times, he'll lunge under the boat at the last minute, cutting the line on the boat, or he'll rub his snout on the bottom finally chaffing light lines until they break.

For this last reason, short leaders are helpful to avoid breakoffs. A short Bimini of only 6" or so is sufficient, or you can add a 12" section of leader double the strength of the main fishing line. This short leader system avoids casting problems which occur with longer leaders and knots hanging up in guides as you try to cast a light bucktail. There simply isn't enough lure weight and momentum to pull the line through the guides if there are too many bulky knots.

Back country guide, Gary Register, slips the net under an 8 lb. redfish. The reds were tailing out front of Flamingo and provided excellent sport on light tackle.

Smaller reds are excellent eating, but larger fish of better than 10 lbs. are not so tasty, making better dinner as chowder rather than as broiled fillets.

Most reds will tip the scales at 2 to 6 lbs, a fish over 10 lbs. being considered a large fish; yet they do get much bigger. Few fish are caught over 30 lbs. and a 40 lber. is a rarity.

There is some confusion among biologists about the migrations of redfish, called channel bass or red drum further up the coast. Many biologists believe the Gulf and south Florida waters serve as a nursery grounds for red drum and as the fish mature and increase in size they head to points further north such as Hatteras, the Virginia Coast and Chesapeake Bay. Others still hold to the older belief that the coastal fish may intermingle with the south Florida fish, but the fish are from different tribes and that the Florida redfish do not migrate to distant areas. Perhaps there are mixtures of both ideas with several "local" races of reds and also coastal migrators.

Science aside, redfish are scrappy fighters, ideal opponents on light tackle and plenty of fun to catch in any size you can find them.

PLUGS: GETTING THEM READY

by John Fritz

A dedicated beach rat offers some good advice on preparing for next season.

By the time the first early signs of spring are realized most serious surfmen have finished with their winter maintenance chores. The first order of business, cleaning and regreasing the all-important reels, should have been completed shortly after the close of the season. Prompt attention to the care of these abused mechanical devices is important if replacement costs are to be kept at a minimum. The cleaning and repair of other sundry items can be leisurely worked on throughout the long winter months. Surf rods refinished, waders and top examined for leaks or tears, plug bag and belt equipment checked for those minor annoyances which could be put up with during the busy season, purchasing an ample supply of snaps, swivels and replacement hooks, the list of things to do is extensive, but for many surfmen a task which is a welcome alternative to a dull, dreary season. Some of the chores are tedious whereas others are eagerly undertaken. A task most often placed in the latter category is the refurbishing of those favorite plugs which were worked so often and produced such fine catches last season.

In order to be certain which plugs need to be replaced and which to be refinished, all lures should be examined with the items in need of repair placed in a separate area. While this is being done it can be noted if any specific type of plug is in short supply, possibly to be resupplied during the winter sales when tackle stores are desirous of clearing their shelves of last year's stock.

After the lures in need of repair are chosen they can be further divided into selective categories. For instance, tins which need only to be polished can be separated from those on which the hooks must be replaced or plugs in need of extensive sanding and painting can be attended to after taking care of those which only require the changing of a few hooks. Once the angler has an idea of the amount and types of repair to be undertaken, he can prepare the articles needed to accomplish the task. Replacement hooks and split rings must be ordered while the paint colors must be decided upon and procured. Rather than bother with the cleaning of brushes after each painting, it is advisable to use spray cans. These aerosol cans are especially helpful when attempting to blend two color edges rather than have a sharply

defined line between the normally dark upper half of the plug as compared to the white or silver belly tones most frequently found underneath. Even if a well defined line is desired, a short strip of masking tape will produce a more exact border than one that is painted free-hand with a brush.

Before the repairs are started a few necessary tools should be collected in order to facilitate this task. A pair of regular and needle-nosed pliers, a small screw driver, a few sheets of fine sandpaper, a file and, if available, although not necessary, a split ring pliers should be laid out in the work area. A backdrop should be provided when spray painting along with a series of hangers from which the plugs can be suspended while drying. If repairs to severely damaged plugs are necessary, an ample supply of epoxy, a mixing container and applicator will also be required.

Plugs that are in need of repainting should be stripped of all hooks and split rings. All loose or peeling paint should be scraped off and the plug should be completely sanded free of all rough edges. On lures such as the darter or bottle plugs which are prone to having the front lip smashed against underwater obstructions, a little special care is advised. After all, the rough edges have been sanded smooth, the glossy finish of the surrounding area should be roughened a bit to allow for a better grip for the glue. Mix a sufficient amount of epoxy according to the directions on the tube and spread a thin coating over the damaged lip. The reason for the epoxy coating is to provide a hardened edge which will withstand the battering prevalent when using this type of plug.

Before the painting actually begins it might be desirable to cover all exposed hardware with piece of masking tape. Since the hooks and split rings have already been removed it is a simple matter to cover the front and rear eyes and the belly rings. On plugs equipped with swivels where the belly hooks are connected, care should be taken to ensure that they swing freely and do not become encrusted with paint.

After the epoxy has hardened, paint the area, along with all other places where the bare wood is visible, with a coat of primer. When repairing wooden plugs it is important to seal the exterior surface for bare wood will absorb water increasing the weight and maybe altering the plug's action.

The painting can be as fancy as one's talents permit or as many anglers prefer, one solid color. If artistic design is wanted, the time taken to complete the job will be increased with each different color used. A bit of flash can be obtained by sprinkling Glitter on the plug while the paint is still damp. This Glitter can be purchased in most hobby and some stationery stores. Decals used to simulate eyes can be ordered from the mail order catalogs which cater to "do it yourself" anglers.

Plugs can be repainted to match the original color or changed to allow for a wider selection when encountering unusual fishing conditions. For instance, on several occasions in the past a black plug has been a hot item. Rather than buy a solid black plug, I would prefer to paint a beat-up plug black and purchase a new plug with a shiny professional finish which I could not reproduce. Anyone can paint a plug black—even I.

After the paint has dried, the hardware can now be replaced. Where rusted and damaged split rings are found, they should be discarded and replaced with similar strength rings. Before attaching them to the plugs, make one last check to ensure the soundness of the eyes and swivels.

Badly rusted hooks should obviously be discarded and replaced with similar sized hooks. It is important to use the equivalent weight hooks for the stability of these finely balanced plugs can be changed. This is especially true on the smaller models of such plugs as the Rebels and Red Fins. On many plugs the original hooks leave much to be desired, therefore, many regulars will replace the factory furnished equipment with better hardware. For example: the treble hooks on the 5½" Rebel are replaced with #2 size cadmium 4X strong Eagle Claw trebles while the trebles on the 4½" models are changed for size #4 hooks of the same type and strength. In this way the angler stands a better chance of landing a good sized fish on these small plugs without the fear of straightening a hook. Bent or twisted hooks should be thrown away. Do not attempt to return the hook back into its initial form, because the metal has been weakened and will not stand up to the pressure it was intended.

Most anglers are aware that the method used to secure treble hooks to the plug can vary. Some require the addition of a split ring, while others have an open eye which must be closed with the aid of a pair of pliers. Hooks in this latter category are normally only found on the larger sized plugs. This split eye can be an area of weakness if the gap is not closed correctly and completely. The ring should be squeezed together slowly with a slight twisting motion so that it touches the opposite side of the opening and lies in a straight plane with the rest of the eye without crimping the bend.

If bucktailed or feathered hooks are desired, it would be easier to dress the hook before replacing it on the plug. If fly tying has not been attempted before let me just say that working with bucktail is less difficult than trying to tie feathers. More care is needed to ensure that the feathers lie in a similar position rather than be sticking out in several directions after the wrap is completed. Bucktails can be purchased in the better equipped

(Continued on next page.)

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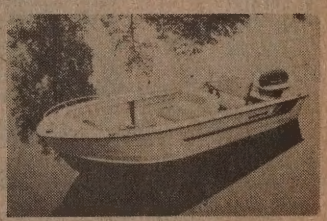

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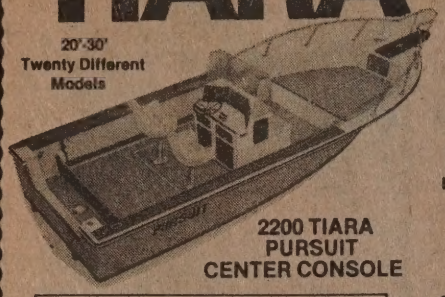

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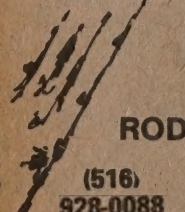

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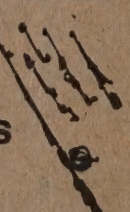

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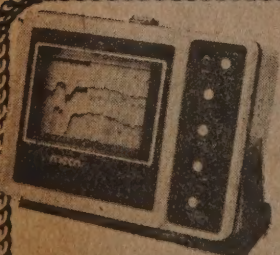

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tackle stores and a single tail will provide an ample amount of hair for a dozen or so hooks, depending on how full a dressing is desired. After the wrapping is finished coat the threaded area with epoxy to provide a durable, longer lasting protection for the thread.

One fallacy many anglers often believe is that a new hook taken directly from its package is sharp. This is not so. Sure, with a stiff rod and a lot of power the barb can be set into most fish, but probably more good fish are lost because the point of the hook is barely piercing the tough gristle of the fish's jaw than for any other reason. It is not necessary to sharpen every replacement hook at this time. A better practice would be to sharpen the hooks on the plugs to be used before the start of each outing. More and more surfmen are adopting the practice of carrying a file on their person during each fishing trip. As each plug is brought into play, a few touches with the file will ensure the sharpest possible hooks. This practice is especially helpful when using light tackle or light tipped rods when it is difficult to set the hook in a hard-jawed game fish such as the striper or bluefish.

Many anglers fail to pay much attention to the care of their tins. This is unfortunate for a highly polished tin will catch the attention of a game fish more readily than one that has been dulled by corrosion. A quick cleaning with a metal polish suitable for chrome finishes will not only produce the desired shine but also prevent further damage caused by salts eating at the plating. If damage to the surface is so extensive that it cannot be brought back to near its original luster, a covering of white or yellow paint will provide a proven fish catcher for those instances when a fierce wind makes plug casting impossible.

The hooks and split rings found on the metal lures should be checked and replaced in the same manner as described in the previous paragraphs. A majority of veteran surfmen prefer to replace all treble hooks found on metal lures with a single free-swinging hook. While bucktail and feathers will provide an added attraction, some anglers are forsaking these time-honored additions for brightly colored tubes. It has been proven by trollers using umbrella rigs that many colors will produce fish, but the colors favored for fishing in the surf are red, white, or green.

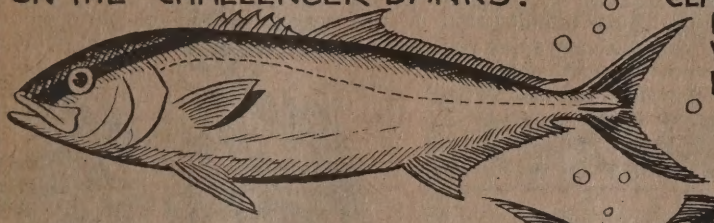
While many fishermen prefer a complete disassociation from everything relating to fishing during the winter months, anglers who take the time to prepare their tackle in the leisure of the off-season will greet the new season with a greater chance of success. Their equipment will be in excellent condition with no time lost on last minute repairs or emergency trips to the tackle store. When the season finally arrives, it is time to go fishing.

SUN BELT FISHING

BY FRED GUARDINEER

IF YOU ARE LUCKY ENOUGH TO GET AWAY FROM THE FROZEN NORTHEAST "FROST BELT" AND TRAVEL TO THE "SUN BELT" WARMER WEATHER, THE OUTSTANDING FISH SHOWN BELOW DEPICT WHAT'S BITING AND THE LATEST IN THE IGFA RECORD BOOK.

BERMUDA AMBERJACK, 155 LBS. 10 OZ.-AN ALL TACKLE 80 LB. LINE RECORD ON THE "CHALLENGER BANKS."

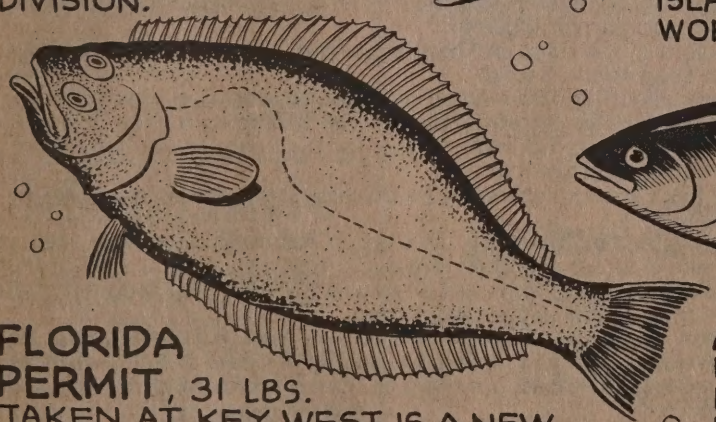


HAWAIIAN MARLIN, 737½ LBS. LINE WON THE 130 LB. CLASS RECORD IN THE WOMEN'S DIVISION.

GEORGIA CATFISH, 46 LBS. CAUGHT BOTTOM FISHING IN THE SAVANNAH RIVER BELOW THE CLARKS HILL DAM - A NEW 12 LB. LINE CLASS RECORD.

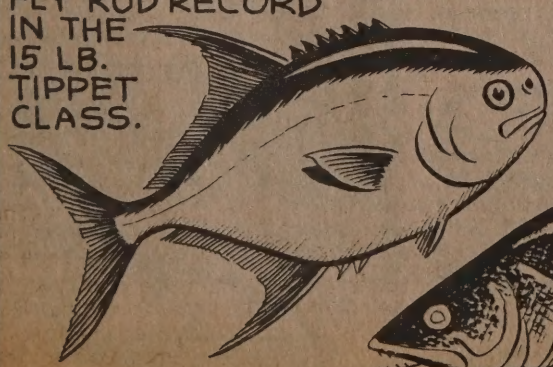
TEXAS ALLIGATOR GAR 78 LBS. FROM THE HOUSTON SHIP CHANNEL IS A NEW WORLD RECORD FOR 12 LB. LINE.

CALIFORNIA HALIBUT, 38½ LBS. OFF SANTA CRUZ ISLAND IS A WOMAN'S WORLD RECORD ON 30 LB. LINE AND ALL TACKLE DIVISION.



MEXICAN YELLOWFIN TUNA, 333½ LBS. CAUGHT OFF CLARION ISLAND SET A NEW 130 LB. LINE WORLD RECORD.

FLORIDA PERMIT, 31 LBS. TAKEN AT KEY WEST IS A NEW FLY ROD RECORD IN THE 15 LB. TIPPET CLASS.



ARKANSAS WALLEYE, 19½ LBS. CAUGHT AT FAIRFIELD BAY IS A NEW WORLD RECORD FOR 12 LB. LINE.

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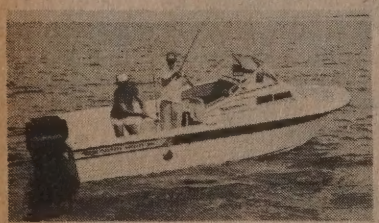

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Montauk Report

by Stu Miller

Captain Paul Forsberg, Jr. of the **Viking Fleet** reports very good codfishing at both Block Island and at Cartwright. Fish are averaging 5-8 lbs. to the tune of 5-10 fish a man with pool fish in the 20s and 30s. Brian Rade was Sunday's high hook with 23 cod. Dad John Rade added another dozen fish to their cooler. The skipper says he is now sailing Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday only, with the boat leaving 5:30AM. Down in Key West, Captain Paul Forsberg, Sr. with the **Viking Starship** reports he has been loading up every trip, working the Tortugas Banks. He says it's the best fishing he has seen down there in five years. On December 21 trip, 18 men totaled 5,000 lbs. of fish, 80 percent being mutton snapper. Paul says come on down and stay ab aboard the Starship, no charge. The boat is docked within walking distance of downtown Key West and all stores.

EDITORIAL: Political Action For 1982

(Continued from page 2.)

license will give us (ALL OF US) the clout we need to make faster and more meaningful progress in protecting and lobbying for our interests. We'll not be part of a plan to force this down anyone's throat, but we eagerly await the day when the fog lifts so we can get down to lobbying more effectively.

With these ideas as a backdrop, we'd like to present our policital action plans for 1982. A list follows:

1. Passage of a bill to prohibit commercial fishing in the waters adjacent to state parks. The reason for this is obvious: eliminate social conflict and ensure the use of the parks for recreation.
2. Support a meaningful State/Federal plan for the management of striped bass.
3. Adoption, by the Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Management Council, of a management plan for bluefish.
4. Changes in the rules and regulations that controls the harvest of bunker in Long Island Sound.
5. Begin gathering data leading to the development of a legislative plan that would change inshore commercial fishing activities.
6. Fishing Advisory Council member for the Long Island State Parks and Recreation Commission.
7. The start of construction of the promised boat launching ramps at Kings Park.

We are sure that there will be other crises during the year, but we project the above as our priorities. We don't expect to succeed at all of them in one year, but we do expect to win a few and to make some progress on the others. One must begin with a single step.

Of course, from time to time we'll need your help and when we do, we'll ask for it. We know that you'll respond the way you have in the past and our family will continue to impact positively on marine recreational angling in the State of New York.

We know that it can get to be a real pain in the ---- to write letters, make phone calls, or attend public hearings. No one likes going out on a rainy night or missing the big game to write a letter after a hard day's work. Yet your sacrifices are essential and each and every letter, phone call, or attendance has both great meaning and value. The volume of response that we can generate is a real indicator as to how much and how carefully people will listen to our points of view. In spite of our problems this is still a democracy and thus, the will of the people can still be felt.

We'll try to keep you posted, but it's often funny that in spite of the fact that we're involved with this project and that project, that we get some of our best information and data from our family. I can't even begin to count the number of times it has been a call or letter from one of you that has meant the difference between success and failure. Keep up the good work, folks.

William A. Muller

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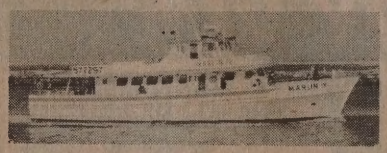

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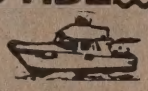

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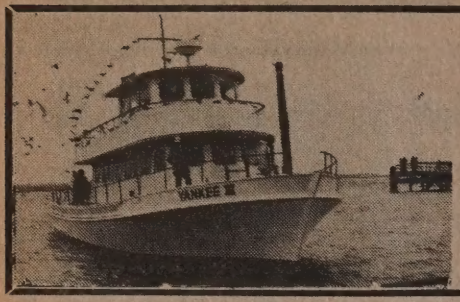

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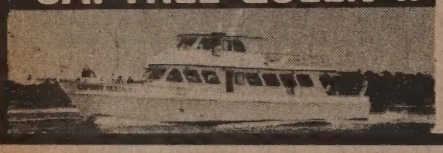

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South Shore Report

by Fred Golofaro

OAKDALE

From **J&R Sport Center**, the big news concerned the catch of a 73lb. 6oz. cod made back on Dec. 14 by a local angler aboard the Captree open boat, **Speedy VII**. Since the catch was made just prior to this publication closing down for the holidays, details are lacking. Keep an eye out in the weeks ahead for a photo and details of this outstanding catch.

The final results of the shop's annual weakfish and trout contest are in. Dave Canale led all trout entries with an 8 lb. Brown taken from the nearby Connetquot River while Bill Steifel's 15.12 lb. tiderunner copped the weakfish category. Each angler will recieve a free mount of their trophy courtest of **Fish Unlimited Taxidermy** in West Babylon.

CAPTREE

Captain Speedy Hubert of the **Speedy VI** confirmed the catch of that 73.6 lb. cod made aboard his boat a couple of weeks back.

Of the current fishing, the skipper labelled it good overall with catches ranging anywhere from 40 to 100 cod per trip. Most fish are 5-12 lbs. with an occasional 30-40 lb. fish taken. Action has been on both open bottom and wrecks, SE of the N.A. Buoy in 110' to 120' of water. Saturday saw over 100 cod come aboard, but Sunday was another story. Speedy attributed the slower fishing to draggers which were working over the area near day's end on Saturday.

Captain Gordon Roman of the **Captree Queen II**, reported fair to good codfishing this past week. He described Saturday's fishing as one of

Gerry Emmrich used Hopkins from the Jones Beach surf to beach this 9 lb. weak. Subscriber photo.

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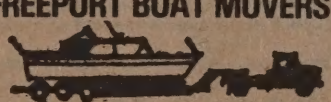

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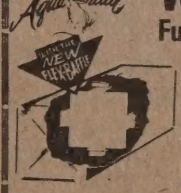

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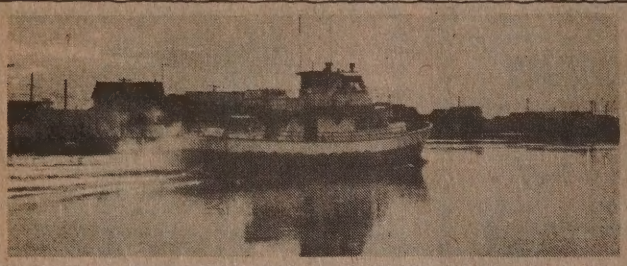

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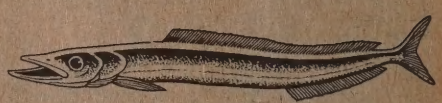

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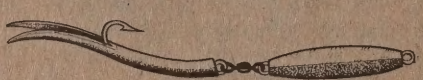

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New York Bight Report

by Stu Miller

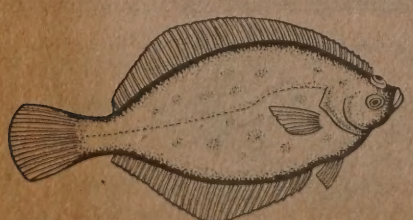
FREEPORT

Captain Al Lindroth of the **Capt. Al** says that the codfishing has been excellent for these last three weeks and fairly consistent. Saturday saw over 200 cod taken and Sunday's trip reflected a body count of 150 cod. Fish are averaging 8-10 lbs. On Saturday's trip John Lind of Brooklyn bagged up with 15 cod while Ed Feret of Seaford, Joe Doyle and Charlie Hillman gathered up 45 nice fish. Rosedale angler Bob Bertha had 10 cod all by himself. On Sunday's trip 20 fares had 70 cod from 12-31 lbs. This has been a combination of open bottom and fishing productive spots around wrecks. Customers took a 61 lber. and a 50 lber. during these last 3 weeks, while we were on vacation. With the decent weather we've been having, good crowds have been turning out.

Captain Richie Kessinger of the **Starstream II** says his fares have had some fantastic codfish catches during the last 3 weeks, with many fish going in the 50s and 60s. Sunday's trip saw 65 cod taken up to 45 lbs. with Jr. Bento of Franklin Square snagging the pool plus 5 other fish. On the Saturday immediately after Christmas customers boated over 175 cod including a lot of big fish including a 45 lber., 48 lber., 49, 56 and 64 lbers.

the best days of the year with 12 fares accounting for 60 cod. Fish range from 5-12 lbs. with a sprinkling of 20-40 lb. fish. Myron Goldstein of Mt. Vernon and Walter Griffith had 10 fish including 2 in the 35-40 lb. class. Fishing was done on open bottom in 120' of water, SE of F.I. Inlet.

A new addition to the Captree fleet in '82 will be the 50' **Prime Time**, skippered by Captain Larry Cicotto. The vessel will be berthed in the former slip of the **Eleanor**.



This 12 lb. 8 oz. weakfish taken back in May by Toni Christ, is now recognized by the IGFA as the current women's 6 lb. class world record. The Rocky Point angler took her fish in the South Race on a Jelly Worm. It was weighed at Rocky Pt. Fishing Stop.

as well. This was a combination of wreck and open bottom fishing.

Captain Jim Lanzarotta of the **Super Spray II** also tells of excellent codding. Jeff Nier of Brooklyn on Dec. 30 scored with a 46 lb. pool winner. Three days earlier Jerry Weiss of Brooklyn rang the bell with 13 cod including a 55 lb. pool winner. This Sunday, Lewis Sitta, Yonkers lifted six cod to 38 lbs. while Ken Hegducek took the pool with a 45 lber. On Saturday's trip, Barry Doll of Bergenfield, N.J. had 7 cod to 35 lbs. The skipper says this has been mostly open bottom fishing with a little wreck fishing thrown in. Fish are averaging 10-15 lbs. and Jim agrees the fishing should remain good while the weather remains reasonable.

POINT LOOKOUT

Captain Dennis of the charter boat **Marie III** had a good morning codfishing for a group the Saturday after Christmas fishing SE of Jones in 110' of water, 155° out. This Sunday's trip for a group from Al's Tackle, Pelham, N.Y. fished in 110' of water, 165° out. Ray Mayer of Yonkers took the pool with a 50 lb. class fish, while Greg Stnis bagged a 40 lb. cod. Catches averaged 3-5 fish a man, using clams on open bottom. Best catches were on moving water and fish averaged 10-15 lbs.

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Troy Haase with a brace of nice weaks taken this past summer at Eaton's Neck. Photo courtesy of Four Winds Bait & Tackle.

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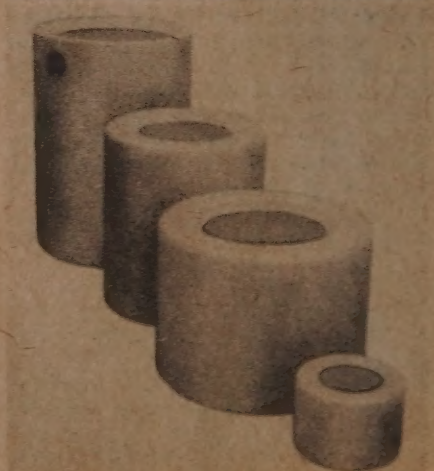

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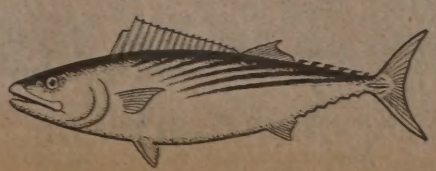

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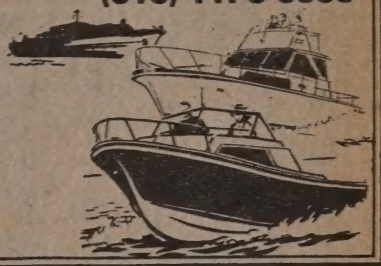

Long Island Fisherman

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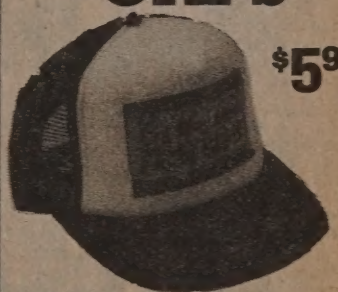

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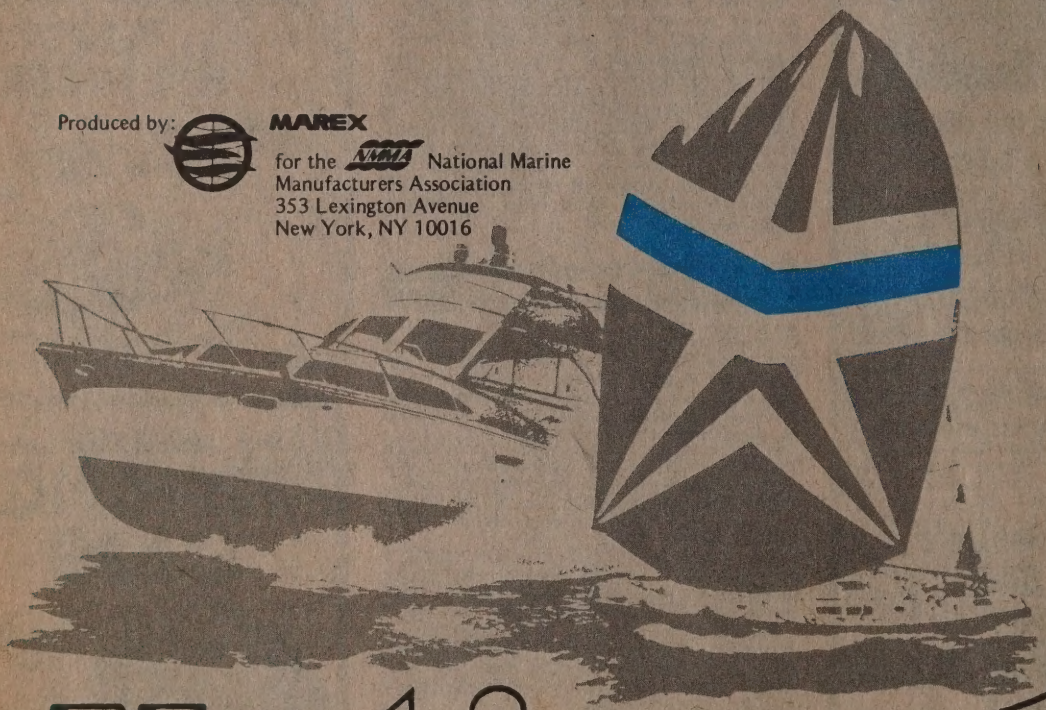

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